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INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4538
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 1612
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 1288
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 9525
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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0654
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA PRIORITY 8433
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 005941

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SUBJECT: JAPAN-ROK AGREE ON STRONGER DPRK MEASURES DURING
PM ABE'S SEOUL VISIT

Classified By: Ambassador J.Thomas Schieffer. Reasons 1.4 (B) (D)

¶1. (C) Summary. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's October 9 visit to Seoul was "quite successful," with summit talks proceeding in a "cool-headed" fashion. According to Japanese foreign ministry officials, the leaders reconfirmed basic values shared by the two nations, and PM Abe invited ROK President Roh to visit Japan. Roh told Abe that the October 9 DPRK nuclear test had been a serious violation of the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Roh confessed that South Korea had placed too much emphasis on dialogue rather than pressure, but now realized the need for strong action against the DPRK in cooperation with Japan. End summary.

Leaders Build Trust

¶2. (C) MOFA Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau NE Asia Division Deputy Director Yo Takaba characterized Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's October 9 visit to Seoul as "quite successful." Takaba told Embassy Tokyo Political Officer October 11 that PM Abe attended a lunch given by ROK Prime Minister Myon-sung Han (in which Han's husband and Abe's wife participated), held a nearly two-hour summit meeting with President Roh, and was feted, along with Mrs. Abe, at a dinner hosted by President and Mrs. Roh. Both leaders appeared anxious to build a personal relationship of mutual trust, Takaba said.

¶3. (C) The summit proceeded in "cool-headed" fashion, Takaba noted, with Abe and Roh expressing recognition that the Japan-ROK relationship was important for both the region and the international community. During the discussion, the two men reconfirmed basic values shared by the two countries: freedom, democracy, human rights, and the free market

economy. Abe invited the President to visit Japan but offered no specific date. Roh responded that he would choose the appropriate time for the trip.

Bilateral Issues

14. (C) According to Takaba, the leaders' summit, which took place immediately after the DPRK announced that it had conducted a nuclear test, focused on three bilateral issues and North Korea.

-- The Past: Roh told his interlocutor that, in order for Japan-ROK relations to proceed, "Japan should face its past." Abe responded that he understood the feelings of the South Korean people and offered his regrets. The PM expressed his intention to build a "future-oriented" relationship based on mutual understanding and trust.

-- Yasukuni: Abe maintained his basic position of not indicating whether he would or would not visit the shrine. Japan and the ROK should overcome their political problems and make an effort to promote sound relations, the Prime Minister told Roh.

-- Scientific research: Abe and Roh welcomed the compromise on prior notification regarding radioactive research being conducted in disputed areas of the Sea of Japan that vice ministerial-level officials reached in mid-September 2006.

North Korea

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15. (C) In a discussion that took up "almost half the time," Takaba said President Roh told Prime Minister Abe that the DPRK test had been a serious violation of the 1992 Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Roh confessed that South Korea had been placing emphasis on dialogue rather than pressure, but now realized the need for strong action against the DPRK in cooperation with Japan. Abe responded that coordination between Japan, ROK, and the U.S. would be extremely important in order to achieve an early resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

16. (C) In reviewing the DPRK's nuclear test, Takaba said, Abe and Roh agreed that:

a) If a North Korean nuclear test were to be confirmed, it would constitute a "grave threat" to the region that should never be accepted;

b) The international community should not accept the North's behavior and ought to consider further strict measures in response;

c) Japan and the ROK need to stand together and take an immediate, firm response; and

d) Japan and South Korea should strengthen their policy coordination for the prompt adoption of a UNSCR that includes strict measures.

17. (C) Turning to the issue of DPRK abductions, Abe said that Japan wanted to improve cooperation with South Korea to settle the issue. Roh replied that the ROK had already been cooperating with Japan and would continue to do so.

SCHIEFFER